



November 23, 2005

Dear Community Friends:

Crime Prevention During The Holidays

Our next few newsletters will examine safety and security during the holiday season and offer recommendations to reduce your risk of being a crime victim during the holiday season.

Prevention Tips While Shopping

- Take a friend along when doing holiday shopping. Using the buddy system reduces your chances of being a victim of robbery.
- When paying by cash, only take out the amount needed and keep the remainder out of view. It's always a good idea to carry minimal amounts of cash, regardless of the time of year.
- Don't tempt a thief by leaving your purse, wallet or packages unattended. It only takes a second to grab them.
- Beware of strangers who bump, shove or get too close. Pickpockets may use these diversions to lift your wallet.
- Be cautious of those you don't know who offer to carry bags and packages for you. Depending on where you shop, store personnel or mall security may offer assistance in carrying packages to your car or escorting you to your vehicle.
- If you have to return to your car to store purchases, place them in the trunk out of sight. Do this when you get to your car, rather than waiting until you park at your next stop. Gifts and other valuables should never be left in clear view.
- Before returning to your car, make sure you're not over-burdened with packages. Have your car keys in hand to avoid "searching" for them when you reach your car.

When Using an ATM

- Only take out the amount you need, rather than the maximum you can get.
- Don't walk away from the cash machine counting your money. That's an invitation to someone who may not have the best of intentions in mind.
- Beware of strangers hanging around the ATM. Wait until they leave, or consider using an alternate cash machine. You should report suspicious people to bank personnel, mall security and/or police.
- Secure your money and your bankcard or credit card back in your wallet or pocket before leaving the ATM.
- Always keep your PIN number separate from your bank and/or credit card.

Something To Keep In Mind

Burglars often enter through unlocked doors or windows. When exterior Christmas light extension cords are run inside through a window, this prevents the window from being secured, and this unsecured window is visibly noticeable. Consider installing an inexpensive exterior outlet for your holiday lights so you don't provide an opened and unlocked entry to your home.

Get Prepared Workshop

Barb Graff, director of Seattle's Office of Emergency Management will be hosting a presentation addressing personal preparedness for emergencies. The presentation will be Saturday, December 10th from 1-2pm at Rainier Beach High School (8815 Seward Park Ave S, 98118). Please join us.

Take Care and Stay Safe!

Mark Solomon
South Precinct Crime Prevention Coordinator